

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 829

By Henry

A RESOLUTION to congratulate the Nashville Rescue Mission on celebrating fifty years of service to the homeless of the Nashville community.

WHEREAS, reaching out to the poor and those without shelter has been a basic tenet of those who follow the Judeo-Christian religious tradition, and indeed, is a part of most of the world's great religions; and

WHEREAS, fifty years ago, Dr. Charles Fuller, founder of Fuller Theological Seminary in California, conducted a week of revivals at the Ryman Auditorium; each day as he made his way from his hotel to the Ryman, Dr. Fuller passed numerous homeless men; and

WHEREAS, struck by their obvious need, Dr. Fuller incorporated the plight of the homeless into his revival sermons, and at the end of the week, when he received a love offering for his service, he returned the offering to the people of Nashville to care for the city's homeless; and

WHEREAS, the Nashville Rescue Mission was incorporated March 16, 1954; the late Secretary of State, Joe Carr, signed the incorporation papers and served on the Board of Directors; and

WHEREAS, from a storefront ministry with a \$12,000 budget, the Mission grew over the next half-century to an operation with a \$6.5 million budget utilizing two facilities with thousands of square feet; the Mission receives financial donations and gifts-in-kind from individuals, churches and businesses and makes use of the time and energy of 16,000-20,000 volunteers each year to serve homeless men, women and children; and

WHEREAS, the Nashville Rescue Mission, a faith based, nonprofit organization, is open seven days a week, 365 days a year to serve the homeless, hungry and hurting population of Middle Tennessee by offering humanitarian and spiritual help; the necessities of life, including

three meals a day at no cost to the client, are provided at no cost to taxpayers, as no government funds are accepted or used; and

WHEREAS, of Metropolitan Nashville's estimated 9,000 homeless men, women and children, 6,227 were served by the Nashville Rescue Mission in 2003; a projected 200,000 nights of lodging and 454,000 meals will be provided in 2004; and

WHEREAS, the Mission's programs protect the homeless from hypothermia and frostbite in winter and heat stroke and dehydration in summer; more than 1,540 patients were seen in the Mission's medical clinics in 2003, reducing the spread of communicable disease in the street and providing for the diagnosis and treatment of the elevated rates among the homeless of such illnesses as tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS, malnutrition, diabetes and hypertension; and

WHEREAS, because of the Nashville Rescue Mission's work and programs, business owners and police contend with fewer panhandlers, and law enforcement and court officers don't have to use limited time and resources prosecuting victimless crimes; and

WHEREAS, the Nashville Rescue Mission's life-recovery program curricula include work therapy, Christian counseling, and drug and alcohol detoxification; in 2003, 170 women and 283 men completed Mission life-recovery programs; and

WHEREAS, life-recovery program clients learn job-hunting and financial skills, and program graduates find jobs, stable housing and are able to integrate into the mainstream of society; these successful graduates break the cycle of intergenerational homelessness, often reunite with extended family members and friends, and serve as role models for their churches and communities; and

WHEREAS, in 2003, 23 people earned GED certificates at the Mission, and a projected 159,000 hours of education and training will be offered in 2004; also last year 117 men who had gainful employment stayed in the halfway house, and Travelers Aid assisted more than 1,160 stranded travelers; and

WHEREAS, for the past half century the Nashville Rescue Mission has provided invaluable humanitarian and spiritual service to the homeless population of Nashville and Middle Tennessee in a continuing effort to return them to economic independence, a renewed feeling of

self-worth, spiritual health, and hope for their future, and accordingly should be specially recognized; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that the members of this General Assembly pause in their deliberations to congratulate the Nashville Rescue Mission upon the celebration on March 16, 2004, of its 50th anniversary of service to the homeless population of Nashville and Middle Tennessee.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we thank all past and present staff, volunteers and patrons of the Nashville Rescue Mission for their half-century of selfless effort on behalf of the homeless and offer our best wishes for every success and satisfaction in the future.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.